



Our Lady of Lourdes Hospitality North American Volunteers

Travel Tips

Lourdes Travel Preparation, What you should know!

\$ Dollars and Euros €

- Call your bank to inform them that you are traveling internationally to France.
- A debit card for cash withdrawals and a credit card for purchases assures the most favorable exchange rate.
- Euro CASH is required for café or gift shop purchases of less than 20€ which is the standard credit card minimum.
- NO Travelers checks!

Currency Exchange

- At home, euros can be ordered for a service fee at banks or some AAA offices before departure.
- ATM withdrawals are the easiest way to access Euros in France at the best available exchange rate. ATM machines are available in Lourdes and in the Paris and Pau airports.
- Each bank (the French bank and your bank at home) will charge a transaction fee for every withdrawal.

Changing Time Zones

- France is six hours ahead of the Eastern time zone.
- Be prepared for travel fatigue. Be patient with yourself and others as brain function remains in the past time zone!
- To better adjust to the 6 hour time change—stay up! Eat and sleep in the new time zone schedule from the first day.
- Make efforts to fight fatigue on arrival day by keeping active. Only nap if you must and are able to easily get up again after a short rest and not require a full nights sleep.

Electrical Adapters & Transformers

- The European electrical system operates on 220 current with a greater voltage fluctuation than US 110.
- American appliances need an adapter and a transformer.
- Dual Voltage appliances, adapters and transformers can be purchased at many stores online.



Telephones

Remove unknown caller blocks to receive calls from Europe at home.

Call your cell phone carrier to add international phone plan.

Update the Lourdes Volunteer office team with any cell phone number you will use during travel.

Internet Access

Available in our accommodations and several other locations in Lourdes:

- St. Michel Gate
- Front of HNDL offices
- Near benches in front of the Centre d'Info
- Accueil Notre Dame

Around Lourdes

The town of Lourdes is about a 20 minute uphill walk from the Grotto.

A bus departs every 20 minutes from St. Joseph's Gate up to town and the train station for 2-3 €.

The Chateau Forte is open daily with elevator access; admission is 6€.

Bartres is ten minutes by public bus at 6€ or taxi at 12-20€ each way.

Transporting Lourdes Water

Glass and plastic bottles with Lourdes images are easily available in shops outside the Sanctuary beginning at 50¢ each.

Lourdes Water must be packed inside checked luggage. Lourdes water containers cost 2-5 € and hold 2-25 pounds of water.

Shopping

Airport duty-free provides tax-free shopping for perfumes, colognes and French food products.

Rosaries and religious souvenirs are available at multiple shops lining the streets outside the Sanctuary.

Lourdes French Market is in the town center open daily 7:30 - noon with fresh foods, wines, flowers, local delicacies and regional goods.

Eating Out In Lourdes

French and local cuisine is offered at nearby restaurants in Lourdes. Meal prices are 10-30€ with tip per person not including wine or dessert.

French pastries and ice cream are a special treat well worth the calories and the cost! Bistros and cafés are nearby offering luscious desserts and French coffees for 5-10€.

SAFEGUARDING TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

- The travel neck wallet is provided to secure documents throughout travel safeguarding against lost tickets, boarding passes and passports. Please wear the travel wallet en route.
- Keep your passport and money in a safe and concealed place within your room throughout your stay at Lourdes.

Packing an EMERGENCY TRAVEL KIT Inside Your Carry-On

Create a small separate emergency pack containing a passport copy, emergency contact information, Lourdes Volunteers phone numbers, prescription drug list, antibiotics, credit card and small amount of Euros and Dollars.

Lourdes Weather: An Umbrella and Warm Coat or Short Sleeves and Sunscreen!
Mild. sunny weather in spring and autumn and warm summers.
Always a chance of rain. Check before you leave.

What to Wear

Modesty & Comfort Please!

Europeans dress more formally: less jeans, tee-shirts, sneakers or flip-flops.

Appropriate and modest clothing to visit a holy place and attend Holy Mass in Church:

- NO shorts, short skirts, sleeveless or low-cut tops or open midriff.
- Volunteers are to wear uniforms specific to your service role. They are worn all day, everyday!
- Comfortable shoes are a must!

How to Pack

Less is Really More!

- Pack all you might need for 24-48 hours, including medications, in a carry-on bag not to be checked-in.
- Plan to dress in layers adjustable to changing weather with coordinated clothing or mix-and-match outfits.
- Roll clothing to avoid fold marks and prevent the need for ironing.
- Allow room in luggage for Lourdes water and souvenirs to bring home.
- Pack all toiletries in one bag to easily carry into a shared bathroom.

What NOT to Bring

Too Much Stuff!

- highly expensive valuable cameras or costly electronic equipment
- heirlooms or personal valuables
- metal nail files
- pocket knives
- scissors or corkscrews
- lighters or matches
- anything that can be misconstrued as a weapon
- disorganized carry-on with excessive electronics and wires

PACKING LIST SUGGESTIONS

Daily Needs

- ☐ comfortable shoes or sneakers (second pair not worn on plane)
- ☐ 3-5 complete changes of clothing for pilgrims
- ☐ underclothes and socks
- ☐ warm sweater, scarf, and socks
- ☐ jacket (that fits over the sweater)
- ☐ raincoat and hat
- ☐ pajamas, robe, and slippers
- ☐ personal needs items
- ☐ Woolite/Febreeze/wrinkle release
- ☐ travel umbrella
- ☐ gloves

Toiletries & More

- ☐ electrical adapter / transformer/ extension cord for hard to reach outlets
- ☐ shower shoes
- ☐ soap, shampoo, and hair products
- ☐ blow dryer (dual voltage preferred)
- ☐ razors or shaver
- ☐ deodorant
- ☐ nail clippers or emery board file
- ☐ vitamins, aspirin, cough drops, etc.
- ☐ band-aids
- ☐ moist towelettes
- ☐ sunscreen and sunglasses
- ☐ moisturizer / lotion
- ☐ travel tissues

Possible Needs

- ☐ health insurance cards
- ☐ prescription medications
- ☐ medical equipment and supplies
- ☐ Covid-19 self test kit
- ☐ antibiotics (if usual/possibly needed)
- ☐ sugar substitute packets
- ☐ healthy snacks (for delays and waits)
- ☐ address book or prepared address labels to mail postcards home
- ☐ business cards or address labels to share with new pilgrimage friends
- ☐ plastic zip bags to contain liquids
- ☐ camera and batteries
- ☐ prayer book or journal and pen
- ☐ chewing gum (for flights)